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Marine Asserts:

High School Dropouts Shouldn't Go To War

A Marine officer said yesterday that high school dropouts and juvenile delinquents should not be called upon to fight the war in Viet Nam.

Speaking before the Anne Arundel County League of Women Voters at the Chesapeake Restaurant Lt. Col. William R. Corson compared the power of the United States to a sledge hammer. But, he warned, it must be "used as a scalpel."

Col. Corson, a member of the English History and Government faculty at the Naval Academy said:

"We don't want any high school dropouts or juvenile delinquents fighting this fight because one word in the wrong place can lift the top off Pandora's box."

At one time the Viet Cong were prepared to surrender, he said, but the Red Chinese put 20,000 men into the north to repair the railroads.

This turned the tide of battle and the Viet Cong won in the north with the presence of a foreign force, Col. Corson said.

The United States cannot win the war without sustaining casualties, he continued, and no one dreads seeing the casualty list more than American military leaders.

He commented that Americans were impatient people and that

when he hears people clamoring to bomb Hanoi "I shudder."

United States blunders in the Far East go back to the days of the Boxer Rebellion, he pointed out.

At that time, the Empress of China, weary of western domination organized a secret society to terrorize the country and cause an uprising culminating in 1900 in the siege of legations in Peking.

During the rebellion, the Boxers assassinated American missionaries and burned villages. But the Chinese were led to believe that Americans were killing their own missionaries.

The United States government agreed to reimburse the Chinese for losses incurred in the rebellion.

Col. Corson noted that the Chinese philosophy is that you never apologize when you are right. Since the United States reimbursed the Chinese, this was taken as an admission of guilt.

He said Red China is a great power and by the year 2000 China will be the strongest single power in the world.

The Chinese believe if something is a secret it is true, but if it is made public it is propaganda.

"We must be careful that we don't help make the propaganda

appear rational," Col. Corson cautioned.

He told the women that "informed citizens are the strength of a free nation" and complimented the League on its study of Red China.

"Don't let public officials make statements they don't live up to," Col. Corson advised. "Keep them on the dime, if they say they'll do something, see that they do it."

He also said that some of the mothers of 80 Naval Academy students who will graduate in June were not happy about their choice of service in the Marine Corps.

But, he said, in his opinion they were 80 of the top men at the Academy. When they finish their tour, the colonel emphasized, they will be informed leaders.

Col. Corson spent 13 years in the Orient and China after World War II. He has worked for the Department of State, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Office of Naval Intelligence.

In addition, he has served with the Office of the Secretary of Defense in the field of special operations applying to Asia and China.

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